

Sports + Leisure 16-Oct-2017

## Sports eyewear for a new generation of runners: Nike Vision Vaporwing sunglasses for running

Two strong partners, Nike Vision and ZEISS, have teamed up to create a pair of sports sunglasses for runners who go the extra mile.

**These sports sunglasses feature the perfect symbiosis of frames and lenses. Working closely with ZEISS, Nike Vision has developed a revolutionary pair of sunglasses for those runners who always give 110%. These sunglasses enable runners to concentrate completely on their athletic performance. BETTER VISION wanted to know more. We asked Carl Allen and Vincent Faivre d'Arcier, designers from Nike Vision, and Flora Schierano from ZEISS about the development of the Nike Vision Vaporwing sunglasses.**



**BETTER VISION: The new  Nike Vision Vaporwing sports sunglasses feature a striking and innovative design. Tell us about the design process?**

**Carl Allen (Nike Vision):** We started by studying and working hard to truly understand athletes' requirements. After a lot of research, we realised that eyewear manufacturing today couldn't keep up with the constantly evolving needs of athletes. In order to bring elevated levels of performance to eyewear, we realised that we would have to change the way eyewear is made beginning with the lens. Starting from scratch, we had to forget everything we knew about lenses and manufacturing to come up with this innovative concept. We wanted to blur the line between the spectacle frame and the lenses and thought: what if the lens became the frame and vice versa? For us, eyewear is all about protection and performance, that's why it was so important to be able to extend the lens as far as possible and provide maximum coverage, putting athletes into their running zone and enabling them to focus completely on their athletic performance.

**BETTER VISION: Are these sports sunglasses designed exclusively for runners or could other athletes also wear them? Could I, for example, wear them as normal sunglasses?**

**Vincent Faivre d'Arcier (Nike Vision):** We designed this lens with runners in mind, but that doesn't mean it can't be used in other sports that require maximum coverage and protection. And of course you can also wear these as normal sunglasses.



**BETTER VISION: What innovations in the lenses are common to other ZEISS products? And what innovations have been developed specially for this new ZEISS lens for Nike Vision?**

**Flora Schierano (ZEISS):** ZEISS is always developing new tints to help athletes perform better, no matter the sport's environment or light conditions. Our collaboration with Nike Vision for the Nike Vision Vaporwing sports sunglasses was very special.

ZEISS has been able to transform an innovative design into a real lens, with fine optics and sharp visual clarity. Bringing together a team of experts in the field of optics, ophthalmologists, manufacturing experts and more, the ZEISS staff looked to the company's other departments, such as its Industrial Metrology business group, for a solution. While 98% of sunglasses are produced from pre-existing moulds, the ZEISS teams in Germany and Italy developed metrics for a new mould specific to Nike Vision's eyewear – starting from scratch, they created a mould that would be as close to optical perfection as possible. Creating a mould like this also ensures that, since the eyewear comes out in its final shape, waste is eliminated that you would otherwise encounter in the typical production process with a pre-existing mould (when cutting down the final product).

Once produced, the mould was polished using the same diamond cutting technology used to polish ultra-precise optical surfaces, ensuring as little blur as possible by removing all flaws in the eyewear's mould. The laborious process meant ZEISS' team was required to cut the mould to fit the geometric measurements of the sunglasses. Upwards of 30 revisions were required to perfect the specifications and mathematics for the final product.

For decades the strict optical 0.09D standards for sunglasses have constrained designers, forcing them to use only simple spheres and torics for the optical surfaces in their premium products. ZEISS has adapted advanced freeform design and manufacturing techniques developed for ophthalmic and precision optics to achieve 0.06D optical performance for general, complexly shaped surfaces.

This extra freedom has enabled the creative team at Nike Vision to simultaneously optimise the fit, the aerodynamics, and the aesthetics of their new line of premium athletic eyewear without compromising optical performance.

The revolutionary production process had never been utilised for eyewear before, but it will undoubtedly set the standard for eyewear production moving forward.

### **BETTER VISION: How long did it take to develop these sports sunglasses?**

**Vincent Faivre d'Arcier (Nike Vision):** It took us over 2 years from the drawing board to the final product. We had to rethink what eyewear would look like. We had to forget everything we knew about lenses and manufacturing to be able to start from scratch and come up with this innovative concept. We didn't even know at the time if this product was going to be manufacturable. We really focused on the lens, which for us seemed to be the most important part of the frame at that time. We wanted to blur the lines between the frames and the lenses, asking ourselves: what if the lens became the frame and vice versa?

For us, eyewear is all about protection and performance. That is why it was so important to be able to extend the lens as far as possible. This provides maximum coverage, allowing runners and other athletes to focus solely on achieving an outstanding performance.

### **BETTER VISION: How did this cooperation between Nike Vision and Marchon, the manufacturer of the frames, come about?**

**Carl Allen (Nike Vision):** For years, Nike Vision has partnered with Marchon to create the Nike Vision line based on our expertise in the eyewear industry. This particular project arose from the desire to truly reshape the performance eyewear industry. The goal was to make Nike Vision the innovative leader in eyewear much in the same way that Nike Vision is the innovative leader in performance footwear and apparel.

### **BETTER VISION: What actually distinguishes excellent sports eyewear from just good sports eyewear?**

**Carl Allen (Nike Vision):** The clarity of the lenses, the coverage and the 'right-weight-ness' (i.e. being light weigh) without forgetting the psychological aspect. We wanted runners and other athletes to feel like a superheroes while wearing these frames, giving them a psychological advantage.

We also wanted runners to forget about their glasses while running – clarity of the lenses, 'rightweightness' and fit: together these factors create frames that perfectly fit your face. No fogging and maximum venting is also part of the equation. Zero distractions means you can fully focus on your run.

[Further information about Nike Vision Vaporwing sports sunglasses](#)

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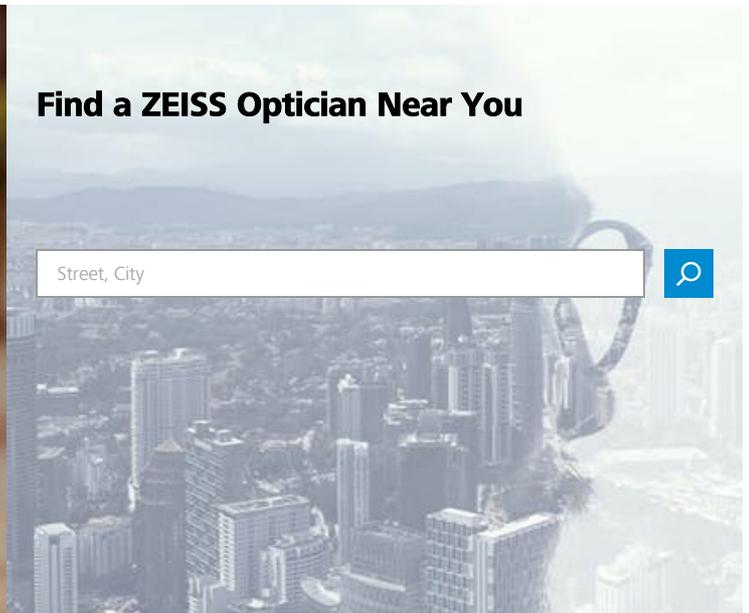
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